

EEOC Form 5 (11/09)

CHARGE OF DISCRIMINATION This form is affected by the Privacy Act of 1974. See enclosed Privacy Act Statement and other information before completing this form.		Charge Presented To: Agency(ies) Charge No(s): <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> FEPA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EEOC </div> <div style="color: red; font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">410-2023-00209</div> </div>			
NA State or local Agency, if any				and EEOC	
Name (indicate Mr., Ms., Mrs.)		Home Phone (Incl. Area Code)		Date of Birth	
Ms. Kristie Walker		678-523-4526		6/8/71	
Street Address		City, State and ZIP Code			
367 Baywood Way		Hiram GA 30141			
Named is the Employer, Labor Organization, Employment Agency, Apprenticeship Committee, or State or Local Government Agency That I Believe Discriminated Against Me or Others. (If more than two, list under PARTICULARS below.)					
Name		No. Employees, Members		Phone No. (Include Area Code)	
Atlanta Public School District		500+		404-802-3500	
Street Address		City, State and ZIP Code			
130 Trinity Ave. NW		Atlanta GA 30303			
Name		No. Employees, Members		Phone No. (Include Area Code)	
US EEOC ATDO RECEIVED 09-25-2022					
Street Address City, State and ZIP Code					
DISCRIMINATION BASED ON (Check appropriate box(es).)				DATE(S) DISCRIMINATION TOOK PLACE	
<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> RACE</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> COLOR</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SEX</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> NATIONAL ORIGIN</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RETALIATION</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> AGE</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISABILITY</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> GENETIC INFORMATION</div> <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (Specify)</div> </div>				<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>Earliest</div> <div>Latest</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; font-size: 1.2em;"> <div>March 2022</div> <div>September 2022</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONTINUING ACTION </div>	

THE PARTICULARS ARE (If additional paper is needed, attach extra sheet(s)):

My name is Kristie Walker. From November 21, 2021 to September 2, 2022, I worked as an employee relations specialist in the Human Resources Office of the Atlanta Public School ("APS") District. I was responsible for investigating complaints of employee misconduct within a cluster of 10-12 schools assigned to me. My direct supervisor was Toni Sellers-Pitts, who was executive director of the employee relations department.

In March 2022, a new employee named Leverius Glass joined the employee relations department. Over the first two months of his employment, Mr. Glass engaged in behavior that consisted of verbal abuse, intimidation, and threats toward me and several other female employees: this conduct included loud outbursts toward me in March and April. During one incident in March, he proclaimed that I had "harassed" him after tapping him on the shoulder to ask him to hand me an ink pen; on April 15, Mr. Glass and I were physically in the same adjoining cubicles while we were conducting a virtual employee investigative interview; he started to become argumentative and disruptive with me in the employee's presence; when I had no choice but to disconnect him from the call, he physically confronted me in a threatening and aggressive tone that made me fearful he was going to strike me.

I complained to Ms. Sellers-Pitts about Mr. Glass' odd and abusive conduct. Her response, which astonished me, was that APS had to be careful about taking action against him because he was a gay man who might accuse the district of discrimination.

I was deeply shaken by Mr. Glass acting in a threatening manner toward me in April. I have a history of anxiety and was triggered to have panic attacks in the days after the incident. I sought out the mental health wellness coordinator in the HR department, Nzinga Benton, my personal doctor, and a therapist in the employee assistance program, Carol Meltzer. My condition was at the point that Ms. Meltzer told me that I needed to consult a lawyer about the hostile work conditions I was experiencing. My doctor directed me to take some time off in April for reasons related to workplace stress.

In late June 2022, I filed a written HR complaint about the hostile conditions that Ms. Glass was creating for other employees, including myself. APS to my knowledge took no steps to address this complaint; instead, I received a written notice of correction

for in effect provoking Mr. Glass prior to the April 15 episode. As an HR specialist, I do not feel APS honored its policies regarding workplace intimidation or violence, which left me feeling unsafe. It turns out that in mid July, Mr. Glass ended up being fired for getting into a confrontation with two onsite police officers in the APS parking deck; yet APS had ignored my complaints about him for several months.

In the summer of 2022, I increasingly noticed that Ms. Sellers-Pitts started to become disparaging and negative in her interactions with me: she was constantly critical, openly used profanity with me, and was rude and dismissive toward me. My complaint about Mr. Glass had documented that she did not any actions to stop his behavior or address my fears, and I believe that she was angered by my referencing her in the Glass complaint. She would remark in staff meetings that we were not to do anything that would reflect poorly on her or "make her look bad" to APS leadership. Ms. Sellers-Pitts started to comment that if any of us thought about making complaints about her that we needed to know the head of the HR Department, Nicole Lawson, was her sorority sister.

All of this was on top of a pattern of inappropriate or troubling behavior I had already begun observing on the part of Ms. Sellers-Pitts. She would comment to staffers that she was involved with multiple men and had to leave work for sexual encounters with some of them; she forced me to continue working when I was out sick with COVID during May 2022 and having major respiratory difficulties; she was sloppy about protecting the confidentiality of leave paperwork related to employees' requests for leave under the Family Medical Act and accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") ; and under her leadership, the department could take months to process ADA requests that should take days. In addition, Ms. Sellers-Pitts regularly improperly delayed or failed to even process Title IX complaints, which we had been told were priority.

In early August 2022, I filed a lengthy written complaint with Ms. Lawson about Ms. Sellers-Pitts, who redirected me to meet with Connie Brown, the Executive Director of the Office of Internal Compliance: in this document, I described a pattern of retaliation and threats, as well as sexually inappropriate language in the workplace, and outlined the various process/policy violations in the employee relations department. Ms. Brown told me that she would formally investigate but she took no notes during the meeting and in my view seemed dismissive of some of my concerns, at one point even suggesting that I might consider resigning as opposed to promising some intervention on my behalf. Several times, I said to Ms. Brown that I believed I was reaching an emotional breaking point.

During the June to August 2022 period, I was often visibly distraught at work. I worked with Ms. Sellers-Pitts at a public university before we both came to APS and we had at one point been friendly enough that I shared with her that I had a long history of emotional distress and anxiety and was prone to depressive episodes. Despite knowing of this condition, Ms. Sellers-Pitts was in my view verbally abusive and seemed completely indifferent to the stress I was under. It did not help that I was investigating an allegation of sexual abuse of a student by an APS teacher, which triggered me because of trauma I suffered as a child. I had told Ms. Sellers-Pitts about my history, yet she assigned me this case anyway.

In late August, the student who made the allegations of abuse posted a video on social media in which she graphically described the events she experienced. I suffered a near breakdown when I heard the video. A few days later, on September 2, I overheard Ms. Seller-Pitts on the phone referring to me as she said "f***that b*****" and "heifer"; and bragging that while I was trying to complain about her, that "she had [my] ass in a snare" because she was going to pin any accountability for APS failing address the student's abuse allegations on me.

I felt that after I overheard the anger in Ms. Sellers-Pitts' voice and her plans to retaliate against me, I had not choice but to resign and I did so later that afternoon. I believed that for the sake of my mental health, I had to separate myself from APS and Ms. Sellers-Pitts.

The conditions I faced at APS reflected a hostile work environment motivated by my complaints of discrimination and retaliation, and my reporting of internal practices that failed to adequately protect employees' rights under the ADA and FMLA, and students' rights under Title IX. I was also retaliated against in that I was unfairly disciplined in connection with my complaints about a verbally abusive and hostile coworker. In addition, I believe that APS had actual and constructive knowledge of my deteriorating mental health condition in the summer of 2022 and failed to take the steps required under the ADA to initiate an interactive process regarding accommodations including a short-term leave. The inaction by APS and deliberate verbal abuse by my supervisor over a three month period, while she knew of my pre-existing mental health condition, constituted unlawful disability-based discrimination. These actions violated my rights under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as the ADA.

I want this charge filed with both the EEOC and the State or local Agency, if any. I will advise the agencies if I change my address or phone number and I will cooperate fully with them in the processing of my charge in accordance with their procedures.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the above is true and correct.

09 / 24 / 2022

Kristie Walker

Date

Charging Party Signature

NOTARY – *When necessary for State and Local Agency Requirements*

I swear or affirm that I have read the above charge and that it is true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

SIGNATURE OF COMPLAINANT

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME THIS DATE
(month, day, year)



Audit Trail

TITLE	EEOC charge Kristi Walker
FILE NAME	EEOC charge Re Kristi Walker.pdf
DOCUMENT ID	eb05a621df4585cc010bdd65cd0e47bae8223f0e
AUDIT TRAIL DATE FORMAT	MM / DD / YYYY
STATUS	● Signed

Document History



09 / 24 / 2022
21:15:28 UTC-4

Sent for signature to Kristie Walker
(kristiewalker123@msn.com) from jwalker@hkm.com
IP: 76.97.141.204



VIEWED

09 / 24 / 2022
21:19:09 UTC-4

Viewed by Kristie Walker (kristiewalker123@msn.com)
IP: 71.199.177.170



SIGNED

09 / 24 / 2022
21:19:55 UTC-4

Signed by Kristie Walker (kristiewalker123@msn.com)
IP: 71.199.177.170



COMPLETED

09 / 24 / 2022
21:19:55 UTC-4

The document has been completed.